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Request for the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session

Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity

Letter dated 13 November 2000 from the representatives of Bulgaria, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the General Assembly

With reference to rule 15 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we have the honour to request the inclusion of an additional item entitled "Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity" in the agenda of the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

We recommend that item be considered directly in the plenary meeting.

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly we attach an explanatory memorandum (annex I) and a draft resolution (annex II).

(*Signed*) Vladimir C. **Sotirov**
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Walter **Balzan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Janusz **Stańczyk**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Poland to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Peter **Tomka**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Slovakia to the United Nations

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Annex I

Explanatory memorandum

Solidarity was recognized in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2) as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century.

The Declaration also states that global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly, in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice and that those who suffer most or who benefit least will receive help from those who benefit most.

Founded 20 years ago, the "Solidarity" social movement, whose significance for the world has been acknowledged, notably in the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to its legendary leader, Lech Walesa, and which was indeed based on solidarity ideals, became a great driving force for change, not only in Poland but also in the broader context, which ultimately toppled the Berlin Wall and led to the revival of democracy behind the Iron Curtain.

This movement also contributed to directing the attention of people on all continents to the increasing importance of solidarity as an essential value in relations between individuals, peoples and nations.

Solidarity is not only a requirement of a moral nature, but also a precondition of the efficiency of the policies of individual countries and peoples. It is one of the guarantees of peace in the world.

We are living in a period of widening gaps between the rich and the poor. Authentic progress will not be possible without cooperation between all nations and peoples in overcoming poverty and without solidarity with the have-nots. We must take a positive responsibility for those who cannot assure themselves of sufficient resources for development, whose human rights are not observed and whose dignity is not respected. They are our common concern.

Let the twenty-first century, therefore, be an age of nations, peoples and individuals committed to solidarity. The lonely road leads inescapably to isolation. Supranational structures, founded precisely on the principle of solidarity but respecting local distinctiveness and cultural diversity, hold out the prospect of full and stable development.

The proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity, coinciding as it does with the anniversary of the birth of the "Solidarity" movement, which inspired and paved the way to the aforementioned changes, would help to promote and strengthen the ideals of solidarity as values essential to relations within and among nations, peoples and individuals.

The proclamation of this day would contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration.

Solidarity has various dimensions and finds shape in various planes, which is why the proposed draft resolution of the General Assembly indicates the possibility of commemorating the day in a variety of ways and by a variety of means according to local, regional and international needs.

Annex II

Draft resolution

Proclamation of 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 55/2 of 8 September 2000, entitled "United Nations Millennium Declaration", in which it recognized solidarity as one of the fundamental values essential to international relations in the twenty-first century,

Reaffirming its conviction, as it has been expressed by heads of State and Government in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, that global challenges must be managed in a way that distributes the costs and burdens fairly in accordance with basic principles of equity and social justice,

Mindful of the need for the implementation of the Millennium Declaration,

Emphasizing the importance of solidarity as a moral means of establishing a just and lasting peace in accordance with the purposes and principles set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations,[1]

Recognizing the role of solidarity in the strengthening of international cooperation and mutual understanding,

Recalling that on 31 August, twenty years ago, the independent "Solidarity" movement was born in Poland and, being based on solidarity ideals, proved to be an important driving force for change that ultimately in an international plane toppled the Berlin Wall and led to the revival of democracy behind the Iron Curtain,

Being aware that only when nations, peoples and individuals base their relations on solidarity ideals, humanity might be saved from wars, bridging the gap between the rich and the poor will be facilitated and respect for human rights and dignity enhanced,

1. *Proclaims* 31 August as the International Day of Solidarity in order to promote and strengthen the ideals of solidarity within and among nations, peoples and individuals;

2. *Urges* Governments and national, regional and international organizations to take appropriate steps to observe the International Day of Solidarity and to extend their full cooperation to civil societies and individuals in observing that day.

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[1] Resolution 2625 (XXV), annex.